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PRESTON PAPERS.

(From the originals in the Virginia State Library)

(Continued)

J. BRICKINRIDGE (1) TO COL. WILLIAM PRESTON.

Fort Chiswell June 25th 1780D^r Uncle

Yesterday an Express was Sent you informing you that the Tories were about to rise up New River & that they had killed some persons: The same accounts have since been brought to the Mines & confirmed, so that I believe there is no disputing

(1) This family, whose name is spelt, variously, Breckenridge and Breckinridge, and frequently, in the Augusta records, Brackenridge, is said to have been forced by religious persecution in the reign of Charles II, to fly from Ayrshire to the North of Ireland.

Alexander Breckenridge came to America in 1728, remained some years in Pennsylvania and was in Augusta Co. Va. (then Orange) in 1738, where, he made his first purchase of land. On Feb. 21, 1738, Alexander, George, James, Robert and Adam Breckenridge entered warrants for 100 acres each with Benjamin Borden. In 1740, Alexander Breckenridge proved in Orange County the "Importation" of himself and family. The names of three of the children are illegible. It is probable that one of them was Adam Breckenridge. In 1751 there is a suit which states that Adam Breckenridge, who was in debt to the plaintiff, had gone to Carolina in 1750. On March 16, 1758, the will of Adam Breckenridge was proved.

On May 24, 1744, Jane, widow of Alexander Breckenridge, relinquished administration on his estate to her eldest son George Breckenridge.

Alexander and Jane Breckenridge had issue: 1. George². On April 20, 1748, ther is reference to his wife Ann. A suit begun by him in August 1747, abated March 1748, on account of her death. He is said to have married Ann Doak. He died in Wythe Co. 1790; 2. Col. Robert², was a justice of Augusta 1751 &c., sheriff 1753, was one of the first trustees of Staunton in 1761, removed to what was later Botetourt and when that county was formed in 1769-70, was one of the first justices and lieutenant colonel of militia. Various papers preserved among the Augusta records show that he was in active service on the frontier 1759-61. In 1779 his heirs received bounty land for his services in 1756 commanding a company attached to the 1st Va. Regiment, and also under Col. Andrew Lewis against the Shawnese. He married 1st Mary, daughter of Robert Poague, of Augusta (mentioned as his wife in 1752) and 2d Lettice, daughter of John Preston. Col. Robert Breckenridge died in Botetourt in 1772; 3. James (?). In 1742 a James Breckenridge bought

the certainty of it. Yesterday there was one **Husk** came to the Mines who Capt. Quirk supposed to be a Spie & detained him he informs them of a Body that is gathered up the New River near the Glades; and also that the Chief of His friends are with them & of nine Light horsemen that was killed who attempted to take a parcel of Tories in Carolina.

There was also a Captain of the Militia taken by them of the name of Swift who brings the same accounts, adding that there was a good many British Officers among them but could not ascertain the number. All these accounts seem to alarm

land in Augusta, and in 1746 a suit against him appears in the record; 4. John—nothing known of him; 5. Smith—nothing known of him; 6. Lettice, married Sept. 1749, Elijah McClanahan.

George² and Ann (Doak) Breckenridge had issue: 7. Alexander, married Magdalen Gamble and died in Bourbon Co., Ky., 1813; 8. Robert³ born 1743, died in Bath Co., Ky., 1814, married Mary Doak; 9. John³, married Elizabeth Willoughby, died in Bourbon Co., Ky., 1824; 10. Elizabeth, married Jesse Evans; 11. Letitia, married—Lindsey. 12. Sarah, married—Findley; 13. Jane, married—Alcorn

Children of 2. Col. Robert² Breckenridge: (1st m.): 14. Robert³, 2d Lt. 8th Va. Regt. Aug 10, 1777; 1st Lt. April 4, 1778, transferred to 4th Va. Sept 14, 1778, taken prisoner at Charleston May 12 1780, exchanged July 1781, served to the close of the War. He was a member of the Ky. Constitutional Convention and speaker of the first House of Delegates. He died Sept 11, 1833; 15. Alexander³, 1st Lt. Gist's Regt. Jan. 1777, Captain April 22, 1779, captured at Charleston, May 12, 1780, exchanged June 1781. He removed to Ky., and married Jane, widow of Col. John Floyd and daughter of Col. John Buchanan. (One of his sons was James D. Breckenridge, M. C. from Ky. 1821-23, who died May 1849); (2d m.) 16. William³, of Augusta Co. Va., and Lexington, Ky., married Miss Gillam; 17. John³, born, Dec 2, 1760, died Dec, 14, 1806, was educated at William and Mary, was a member of the House of Delegates of Va., removed in 1793 to Ky where his home was "Cabell's Dale", near Lexington, Attorney General of Ky. 1795-97, member House of Delegates 1797-1800, Speaker 1800, U. S. Senator 1801-1805, and Attorney General of the United States 1805 until his death. He married, Feb 22, 1789, Mary Hopkins, daughter of Col. Joseph Cabell, of Buckingham Co. (Among his children were Letitia who married, 1st Alfred W. Grayson, son of U. S. Senator Wm Grayson, and 2d General Peter B. Porter, of New York, Secretary of War, U. S., 1828-29; Joseph Cabell, Speaker of the Ky. House of Representatives; Rev. John, Rev. Robert J. and Rev. William L., all distinguished divines); 18. James³, of "Grove Hill", Boteourt Co., born March 7, 1763, died May 13, 1833. He married Jan 1, 1791, Ann, daughter of Cary Selden, of Elizabeth City County. He served in the Revolution in Col. Preston's regiment under Green; was a member of the Va. House of Delegates 1789, 1790, 1796-1802, 1806-1808, 1819-21, 1823-24 and M. C. 1809-1817. (Among his descendants were Capt. James Breckenridge, C. S. A.; killed in action, 1865, and Col. Cary Breckenridge C. S. A.; a gallant cavalry officer. For account of descendants of Hon. James Breckenridge see "Seldens of Virginia and Allied Families"—index); 19. Preston³, married Miss Trigg of Ky.; 20. Elizabeth married Samuel Meredith.

the people very much and are chiefly believed. I make no doubt but some of your neighbors will be very active upon this occasion. I am doubtful there is something astir among them now, as Sam'l Ingram has been up in this Quarter and has just returned.

The Express who was sent you is a relation of James Bain and I suppose will give them the news before he reaches you.

I am your very affectionate Newpew

J. Breckinridge

June 25th 1780

[Addressed] Col'o William Preston

To the care of Capt. Byon

[Endorsed] J. Breckinridge to Colo. Preston—About Qusur-
guete

JAMES MCGAVOCK TO COL. WILLIAM PRESTON.

Fort Chiswell, June 30th 1780

D^r Sir

Last night I re^d Inteligence from a person on whom I can depend who gives me such information that alarms me much & which I think if not properly guarded against will be followed by evil consequences. He gives an account of John Griffith being upon Walkers Creek Encourageing the Tories, & getting them in readiness; he has now left that place and gone to their place of Rendezvous at Ramseur's Mill, he is to be back however in about two weeks time in company with a large body of Tories that are to come upon the Inhabitate of this place and to be joined by all those upon Walkers Creek. He has also promised that whoever would take some of the principal men of this County, (your name and mine being particularly mentioned) should be rewarded with a large number of Gunias.

Among the descendant's of Hon. John Breckenridge (the writer of the letter in the text) were John Cabell Breckenridge, Vice President U. S. and Lt. General and Secretary of War C. S. A.; Wm C. P. Breckenridge, Col. C. S. A. and M. C. from Ky; Clifton R. Breckenridge, M. C. from Arkansas; Judge Samuel Miller Breckenridge, of Mo., Brig General Joseph C. Breckenridge, Inspector General U. S. A.

The person who gave me this Information being affraid whilst Griffith was in the County to inform me of it, sent his wife last night who gave me the above information.

Col'o Campbell stopt a few minutes here this morning and to whom I was mentioning these particulars with some others; desired to tel you by the first opp'y that by the Tories not moving any of their property away & of many particulars he heard since he left your house; he has the greatest reason to beleive that the Tories will shortly be back, that it is his opinion if it is in your power to get more assistance from the neighboring Counties, it would be necessary that he is convinced they will make a vigorous attempt to distress the people in this County. He promised he would immediately raise a hundred men and Keep them in Readiness to march upon the shortest notice, to our assistance.

I am Sir, your very hu'ble St
James McGavock

[Adressed] Col. William Preston

To the care of Capt. Byrn

[Endorsed] James McGavock to Col. Preston

June 30-1780-Tories

Mr. McGavocks Letter-June 30-1780

Abt. Insurgeuts

COL. ARTHUR CAMFBELL TO COL. WM PRESTON.

Camp in Bakers Settlost July 3. 1780

Sir

Our Militia have proceeded this far up New River in pursuit of the insurgents under Roberts and I have here received certain intellegence of their being several days march ahead that we have given over hopes of overtaking them, besides the total defeat given at Ramseurs Mill (2) to their main army

(2) The Battle of Ramseur's Mill on the South fork of the Catawba River in North Carolina, was fought June 20, 1780 between a force of about 1300 Tories under Col. John Moore and another of North Carolina state troops and militia under Col. Locke. Late in the action other state troops under General Rutherford arrived. The fight was hard contested, neighbors and relations frequently attacking each other; but the Tories was completely defeated and dispersed.

under Ferguson & Bryan the 22^d of last month have given Gen'l Rutherfords Militia so much leisure as I hope will enable them to intercept Roberts

We have picked up some of the party which I believe to be runaways after hearing of their disaster at ye Mill. I have sent partys 20 miles further south than this and intend to send partys different routs on our return to disarm, distress, and terrify the different Settlements that have been the most active in joining and conutenancing our enemies.

By a letter from Gen'l Rutherford to Col'o Cleveland it appeare the English have called in all their out-posts, broke up their main Camp near Camden, and retreated with precipitation towards Charlestown; a formidable French and Spanish Fleet having blocked up that Bay.—The prisoners I have, or or may take in this State I purpose to have sent to North Carolina—those that may be taken in our own, to be confined at the Lead Mines. The property taken the men insist on being sold for their benefit, but they have agreed to give the money up for the use of the State if so required by the Governor.

I am Sir, your Ob^d & H^b Serv^t

Arthur Campbell

P. S. By y^e Commissaries Book it appears there was 1500 Tories at y^e Mill the morning of their defeat, our men engaged was only 350 commanded by Col. McDowal, the enemy lost their whole Camp 500 killed and taken on the spot many drowned in y^e Mill-pond, and 500 of Gen. Rutherforde Horse coming up towards the end of the Action pursued them several Miles until they all dispersed slaughtering all before them. this I trust will put and end to toryism in this Country. A. C.

Public Service

[Addressed] To Col'o William Preston

[Endorsments] Col'o Campbell to Col'o Preston

3rd July 1780

JOHN MARTIN (3) TO COL. PRESTON.

Long Island y^e 9th Aug. 1780

Dear Coll

having only one moment to spare embrace the oportunity of Sending you a few lines—Ther is now with me about sixty Cherokee Indians there is the greatest probability of peace form the old Towns bamme came in yesterday with the following intiligancs that there is Seventy Creek Indians at Chickamagga one hundred more Daily Expected to fall on our frontiers. We are nor preparing to Receive them we are in high Sprits not the least Dismay^d Should be glad to hear from you by every opertunity pray excuse the Shortness of this as there is Company all Round me & this moment interefers

I am D^r Sir, With great RegardYour most ob^t Ser^t

Joseph Martin

[Address] Col'o William Preston

Montgonery—

[Endorsement] Jos. Martin to Col'o Prston

9 August 1780

PETER KINDERS CONFESSION ON THE TORYS, AUGUST 17th 1780

He said John Griffith listed him about twelve months ago and he further said that our James Duggliss was concerned Living on Cripple Creek. also one Brittin & Cox & Martin Walkers Creek also our Joseph McFarling on Reddy Creek and the said Kinder further says that he poylated [piloted] the said Griffith through the Busshey Mountain to Walkers Creek and he further says that our Sam'll Tompson on New River was concerned and also young Grissom was concerned on New River living near the mouth of peak Creek and the said Kinder further says one Leonard Huff was concerned and further said that one Griffith Lewis was concerned on the South fork of holston River also that one Richard Oney on the head of Clyucle in the Baptist Valey is about to raise a company for

(3) Joseph Martin long promint on the frontier: See this Magazine VII, 113-118, VIII, 347-359.

the King or has done it, and he further says that one Leoward Huff told him that David Ross was a torry also that John Hook was****also the said Kinder further says that Leonard Huff logged in his barn about 3 weeks ago the said Huff told the said Kinder that David Ross & John Hook had sent two men to the British camps to see how they was agoing on**** also that Roger Stats told him that George Forbush was in the club*****—Also that Charles Debrick told him was one of the club also that our John Gilleham was in the club is know a living on nolichuckey

The said Kinder further says that our Nicholas Darter told him that he went through The tory camps when they was embodying themselves at Ramsures' Mill in North Carolina**** also the said Kinder told that the said Griffith told him that our George Cagg ley was in the club, also one Andrew bault on Cripple Creek**Kinder furthur said that Cowley at John Boyds place told him that he had a warm Side to the English and Siginified that the King would git the Country and Griffith said that Andrew Liday on Wolf Creek** is engaged in some Company under his Command Griffith further says our Lambert on Wakers Creek was concerned***And that Richard Wood was concerned in the club—Said Kinder saith that Joshua Jones was in Company with John Griffith at his house and that he Piloted them both over the Mountain to Wakers Creek—Kinder further saith that Griffith told him that William Clevings on holstons River was in Commission under the King.

[Indorsed] Kinders Confession

17 Aug^t 1780—TORIES

Col. Lynches.

WILLIAM CHRISTIAN(4) TO WILLIAM PRESTON.

Mahanaier, the 30th of Aug^t: 1780

Sir

Last week Col. W. Campbell sent a young Negro Fellow of his here. On Sunday he set off to go home and in about three Hours he returned and told us that near the Sinking Spring about four men armed and one unarmed, all on Horse back came up with him and said they must see what letters he had & know his news; that ten of them had been watching Col. Christians all Day on Saturday for him; that they would hang him as soon as they reached peek Creek, where the rest of their Company men waiting; that his master injured them therefore they would destroy his Property wherever found and kill him self and his wife, and tht they were then on their way to his House. On the Information, I hurried up with Dan. & Stephen Trigg(4a); we could make no Discovery—We

(4) William Christian, another leading man of Western Virginia. See this Magazine VII, 14, 243, 244; XVI, 170, 171; XVII, 52 et seq; 169 et seq. (4a) The Trigg family first appears in Virginia in Middlesex County in the latter part of the Seventeenth Century. The register of Christ Church parish there shows that Daniel Trigg and Susan his wife had issue: Abraham, baptised May 4, 1684; Sarah baptised Dec. 26, 1686. There may have been other children. Thomas Kidd and Alice Trigg were married Sept. 18, 1690. A Daniel Trigg died Aug. 13, 1716. Whether he was the Daniel above, or his grandson could probably be ascertained by an examination of the Middlesex records.

Abraham² Trigg (son of Daniel) married 1st Dec. 14, 1705, Elizabeth Guest, 2d Judith Clarke on Jan. 11, 1710.

Issue (1st M.) 3. Mary, baptised March 9, 1706; 4. Elizabeth, baptised May 29, 1709; (2d M.) 5. Susannah, baptised March 1, 1711; 6. Daniel³, baptised June 24, 1713; 7. William³, baptised May 18, 1716; 8. Abraham³, born April 14, 1719

About 1750 the family began its westward movement going to King and Queen and Spotsylvania. Daniel Trigg witnessed a deed in Spotsylvania in 1752, and on Oct. 1, 1759 bought 500 acres in the same county for £80. Daniel, William and Mary Trigg were witnesses to a deed in Spotsylvania 1764. Daniel Trigg died intestate and on March 6, 1769, Mary Trigg, his widow, qualified as his administrator. And on Sept. 4, she qualified as guardian of William, Nancy and James Trigg, infant orphans of Daniel Trigg. The will of John Trigg was dated Feb. 17, 1776 and proved in Spotsylvania May 21, 1778. His legatees were his sister Ann Carter and his brother Thomas Trigg. He states that his brother William Trigg, who was then his fathers administrator had not given him his part of the estate. There is in Spotsylvania a deed in regard to certain slaves between William Trigg of Spotsylvania, of the 1st part; James Trigg of King and Queen of the second part, and Mary Trigg, widow, of Spotsylvania guardian of Thomas Trigg, of the 3d part: These were probably the widow and some of the children of Daniel

I have desired this man to send this Letter by some Opp'o from Fort Chiswell or thereabouts, as I hear you are at the Mines.

The French Armament arrived the 11th of July some where in the Jerseys; and Admiral Graves the 13th with six British Ships of the Line. I have not heard the French Force. The lower country have chiefly raised their men, & are in good Spirtis. I hear Col. Crocket is to march down this River directly, with four or five hundred Men.—

Our poor little Childe's still sick having different Disorders.

Adieu

Wm. Christian—

[Adress] For Col. William Preston

[Endorsements] Wm. Christian to Col. Preston

30 Aug^t 1780

WALTER CROCKETT TO WILLIAM PRESTON.

October 2^d 80.

Dear Col'o

I have try'd all in my power to raise the Militia of this County, but never saw them so backward before, I have got with great difficuttty about one hundred and fifty including the two light horse Companies, which I have sent under the command of Major Cloyd, and have repeated my Orders to the Several delinquent Captains to meet me at the Lead Mine the ninth Instants with what number they can raise them I shall March myself as fast as possible and join Col'o Cleveland

Among later generations have been: Connally F. Trigg, born at Abingdon, March 8, 1810, who removed to Tesuessu in 1856, and who, on July 2, 1862, was appointed U. S. Circuit and District Judge for Tenn., and died near Bristol April 25, 1880.

Connally F. Trigg born at Abingdon, Sept. 18, 1841, M. C., 1885-1887, and Daniel Trigg (son of Dr. Daniel Trigg and his wife Ann Munford, daughter of Dr. Alexander Tompkins) who entered the Naval Academy, resigned in 1861, and entered the U. S. Navy, where he rose to the rank of Lieutenant. He was a member of the House of Delegates from Washington County-1882.

This account of the family from Southwestern Virginia was gathered from rather vague information and there may be errors. If so, corrections are desired.

Where he is incamp'd about twelve miles this side Wilk's Courthouse. Major Cloyd has gone the same Route, and Express having arrived, that informed the Enemy was still at the Quaker Meadows, three men I sent to Col'o Cleveland's Express were fired upon at Fishers Gap, the men returned and are now with Major Cloyd

Sir I am y^r H[']gle Serv^t

Walter Crockett

[Address] Col'o William Presron

[Endorsement] W. Crockett to Col'o Preston

2 Oct^r 1780

, ROBERT FRISTOE TO WM PRESTON.

Sir

I have come to your House according to your appointment in order to March on Duty. I pursued after Lawrence Murry and in three Days after I had your orders I came of with him But Capt. Mastin had taken him Before me; I have taken every measure to get a deserter I have Bin with the Lite Horse pursueing them and hav Exerted my Influence to Bring in the Out Lyurs some of them is comin and I think they will Chiefly all be got in and I shall Do my Endeavour to git them in as for my Circumstance I have Acquainted you with and hope you will Remember what you Inform'd me at Sam'l Thousons: the Losses I must sustain and to Leave my Family Expos'd to every Distress is what I hope you will consider—and I Remain your Hu'be S^r

Rob^t Fristoe

Oct. 2^d 1780

[Addressed] To Col. Wm Preston

[Indorsement] Robt. Fristoe to Col. Preston

2 Oct-1780

(To be continued)